

BRIEF INSTRUCTIONS

FOR

The Pious Christian;

OR, A SURE

GUIDE TO HEAVEN.

By the late Bishop BEVERAGE.



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Brief Instructions, &c.

the Morning, when first awakes, offer up your first Thoughts and Words to God, saying :

GLORY be to God the Father, who hath made me and all the world. Glory be to God the Son, who hath redeemed me and all mankind. Glory be to God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me and all the elect people of God.

As you are rising, say :

I laid me down and slept, and rose up again ; for the Love sustained me, Psal. liii. 5.

While you are putting on your cloaths, consider what you have to do that day ; and if any companion, or business you are to be engaged in, shall tempt or draw you to any sin, as intemperance in-meate and drinks, lust, anger, &c, then arm yourself with resolution against it, and say, *Lord, lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil.*

When your are dresse^d, kneel down by your bed-side and with great reverence and devotion, in God's presence, say your prayers thus, or in like manner :

MORNING PRAYER for a PRIVATE PERSON.

I BLESS and praise thy holy name, most gracious God, for all thy works bestowed upon me from the time of my birth

this present moment; I thank thee for the preservation of me the night past, and for the sweet sleep and refreshment which I enjoyed. Ob! pardon and forgive my manifold sins! I am truly sorry I have offended thee, and fully resolve to do so no more. Assist me this day in the works of my calling, and prosper me in all my undertakings. Give me grace to be true and just in all my dealings; and to do unto all men as I would they should do unto me; enable me to be contented with my present condition, to be diligent in all my duties, watchful against temptations, so humble, modest, chaste, temperate, and moderate in my lawful enjoyments, that they become not a snare to me. Lord, I live in a troublesome sinful world, but do thou take me into thy protection, and then I am safe. Guide me by thy council here, and at last bring me to thy glory; and this I humbly beg for the sake of Jesus Christ, my dear Lord and only Saviour, who hath taught us to pray, Our father, &c.

Prayer being finished, as you go first out of your door, & as you return in, say:

Lord bless my going out, and coming in, from this time forth, evermore, Psalm cxxi. 8.

When you are about to begin to do any work, say:

Prosper thou the work of my hands, O Lord, prosper thou all my work, Psalm xc. 17.

Having thus commended yourself to God, you are under his care and protection, and may comfortably expect his blessing, which he will certainly grant, provided you lead the rest of the day according to this beginning; in order to which be careful first of your thoughts.

If any idle, wandering, impertinent thoughts, or wanton lustful, lascivious thoughts, any envious back-biting, or malicious thoughts shall rise in your hearts, then reject them, by waving them, and thinking on something else and say, *Lord cleanse the thoughts of my heart by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit.*

Second—TAKE HEED OF YOUR WORDS.

1. BEWARE of cursing and profane swearing, and do not think to excuse such extravagances by saying, I was provoked, and am naturally passionate: it is my temper, I can't help it, which in plain English is thus, I have a mind to curse and swear, I will do it; Know therefore, that God hath given you reason and the grace of his Holy Spirit, whereby to curb your nature, and restrain your inclinations, both in this and every other instance.

2. To be noted for lying (besides sin and guilt in respect of God) will make you useless to the world, nobody will trust you, or if they can help it, meddle with you. I advise you therefore children and servants, when you have committed a fault, do not dare to excuse it with a lie, but confess it freely then both parent and master, if they are prudent persons will most cheerfully forgive you.

3. Let not filthy words proceed from your mouth; avoid all obscene, lascivious discourse as you would a plague; for is infectious, and kindles such a fire of lust, as without penitance will certainly bring you to the fire of hell.



RULES

FOR THE BETTER REGULATING YOUR ACTIONS.

1. OBSERVE the golden rule of your blessed Saviour *Whatever ye would that men would do unto you, do you even unto them*, Mat. viii. 12. Let this teach you to be true and just in all your dealings, to be punctual and exact in all your bargains: Not to go beyond or defraud your brother in any matter, for the Lord is the revenger of such.

2. Take heed of excessive drinking, which too often clouds your brains; and if your head shall be stronger than your neighbour's, then to abuse his wickedness, and impose upon him, under such circumstances, is a very base and dishonest practice.

3. Beware of immoderate anger, as you phrase it, of being in a passion, the consequence of which is many times dismal and amazing, for you may do that in the height of provocation, which, if it do not cut you off in the midst of your days, it will bring your grey hairs with sorrow to the grave; when therefore your children or servants have committed a fault, be neither too rash nor too severe in your censure, but treat them with reason, and argue the case calmly with them; and if, after fair admonitions they will not regard you, then it will be prudent to dismiss such a servant, and correct your children.

4. Let your persons be admonished to fly sinful lust, and to shun all filthy polluted practices, which are displeasing to Almighty God.

5. Take heed of covetousness: covetousness is the irre-
gular, unlawful desire of getting wealth.

Now your desires are unlawful when they do transgress the bounds and limits which Almighty God, by his laws, has prescribed to them. For God, who is the God of or-

der, hath established this method. *Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.* Mat. vi. 33. Intimating, that the chief end and design of your business, for which you are sent into the world, is to glorify God, by saving of your soul. And, therefore, when God is dishonoured, and the welfare of your soul neglected, then are your desires irregular and unlawful: particularly if your desires prompt you to trick, cheat or defraud your neighbour in any instance whatsoever, as by telling lies to help out a good bargain, by false weights and measures, by not paying servants or workmens wages, by not discharging just debts when it is in your power, but keeping other men's money to their prejudice, that yourselves may trade with it. In these and many other instances you are covetous: Nay, though you can truly affirm, as you often boast, that you never wronged any man living, but are just and punctual in all your dealings, and never worse than your word, yet if you desire to get an estate, be not so eager, lest you neglect the duties of religion: for instance, you cannot pray in a morning without neglecting your business, nor attend the service of God without thinking on worldly affairs. The festival of the church (those market-days for your souls) are a burthen to you, saying, *When will the new moon be gone that we may sell corn? And the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat?* Amos viii. 5. If the care of your bodies, which should be subordinate to that of your souls, shall be preferred before it, your desires are then unlawful, and are evidently guilty of the sin of covetousness. Nay, though your estates be honestly gotten, yet if you don't employ them to good ends you are still covetous. The intent of wealth is to be beneficial to others as well as to ourselves; he therefore that lives meanly and below his estate, denies himself necessary refreshment, neglects the education and marriage of his children, and finally, he who shall transgress the most necessary duty of being charitable to the poor, and relieving them, that are in distress, his gold and silver for want of use cankering, *the dust of them shall be witness against him,* James v. 3. *Let your conversation be without covetousness and be content with such things as you have; for he said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,* Heb. xii. 5. Be careful for no-

thing, but in every thing, with prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God. The grace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

THE CONCLUSION.

THE work, and other incidents of the day done, and having retired to your chamber, sit down and consider how you have spent the day past; look over your thoughts, what you have said or done, observe likewise what particular blessings you have received; if your behaviour has been regular, bless God for it; if sinful and extravagant in any instance, do not dare to go to bed till you have begged pardon; many as healthy as you have died before; kneel down and say this or the like prayer:

EVENING PRAYER for PRIVATE PERSONS.

I BLESS and praise thy holy name, most gracious God, for all thy mercies bestowed on me from my birth to this very moment. I thank thee for the preservation of the day past. Blessed be thy name that my bones are not broken, that I live in ease, and dwell in safety night and day. O pardon and forgive me my manifold sins, assist me by thy grace and holy spirit to make good these pious resolutions, and with sincerity to continue in my duty to thee, my God, and towards my neighbour. Bless my friends, and forgive my enemies. Take me into thy protection this night, that when I awake, I may gratefully praise and glorify thy holy name, through Jesus Christ, in whose blessed name and word I commend myself to thy mercy, saying, Our Father, &c.

As you are going to bed, say,

I will lay me down in peace and take my rest, for it is thou, O Lord, that makest me to dwell in safety. Psalm iv. 9.

When composed to sleep, close your eyes with the last words of our blessed Saviour, saying,

O Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit. Luke xxiii. 46.

I shall bring up the rear of this little, but most excellent book, with some sentences made use of by a learned member of the church, &c.

*To return good for good is the part of a man,
To return evil for evil is the part of a beast,
To return evil for evil is the part of a devil,
But to return good for evil is the part of a saint.*

To be at war with the devil, is to be at peace with their own consciences.

*They that glut in sin, such pleasure have,
Descend with sickly consciences to the grave,
But true faith make sure,
Christ's bloody wounds, no care.*

*A heart of man can think, no tongue can tell,
The dreadful pains ordain'd and felt in hell:
What here is good, to God ascribed be,
What is harm of right belongs to me.*

THE END.

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